

## **Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers**

All certified teachers in South Dakota are required by law to adhere to the Code of Professional Ethics. The College of Education integrates discussion of the required code into the Teacher Education Program. Students accepted into the Teacher Education Program are expected to be familiar with and abide by the code.

### **S. D. Professional Practices and Standards Commission Chapter 24:08:03 - Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers**

#### **24:08:03:01 Obligations to Students.**

In fulfilling their obligations to the students, educators shall act as follows:

- Not, without just cause, restrain students from independent action in their pursuit of learning;
- Not, without just cause, deny to the students access to varying points of view in the classroom;
- Present subject matter for which they bear responsibility without deliberate suppression or distortion;
- Make reasonable effort to maintain discipline and order in the classroom and the school system to protect the students from the conditions harmful to learning, physical and emotional well-being, health, and safety;
- Conduct professional business in such a way that they do not expose the students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement;
- Accord just and equitable treatment to every student, regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual preference, age, marital status, handicapping condition, national origin, or ethnic background;
- Maintain professional relationships with students without exploitation of a student for personal gain or advantage;
- Keep in confidence information that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law;
- Maintain professional relationships with students in a manner free of vindictiveness, recrimination, and harassment.

Source: 2 SDR 40, effective December 9, 1975; 8 SDR 35, effective October 7, 1981; 11 SDR 96, 11 SDR 112, effective July 1, 1985; 13 SDR 3, effective July 22, 1986; 20 SDR

92, effective December 21, 1993. General Authority: SDCL 13-43-25. Law Implemented: SDCL 13-43-25.

**24:08:03:02. Obligations to the Public.**

In fulfilling their obligations to the public, educators shall act as follows:

- Take precautions to distinguish between their personal views and those of the local school district or governing board;
- Not knowingly distort or misrepresent the facts concerning educational matters in direct and indirect public expressions;
- Not interfere with the colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities;
- Not exploit the local school district or governing board for private gain;
- Not exploit the local school district or governing board to promote political candidates or partisan political activities;
- Accept no gratuities, gifts, or favors that might impair professional judgment, nor offer any favor, service, or thing of value to obtain special advantage;
- Engage in no act that would lead to a felony conviction; and
- Commit no act of moral turpitude or gross immorality;

Source: 2 SDR 40, effective December 9, 1975; 11 SDR 96, 11 SDR 112, effective July 1, 1985; 13 SDR 3, effective July 22, 1986; 20 SDR 92, effective December 21, 1993.

General Authority: SDCL 13-43-25. Law Implemented: SDCL 13-43-25. Cross-Reference: "Moral Turpitude" defined, SDCL 22-1-2; Grounds for revocation or suspension of certificates, SDCL 13-42-9.

**24:08:03:03. Obligations to the Profession.**

In fulfilling their obligations to the profession, educators shall act as follows:

- Accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities;
- Maintain confidentiality of professional information acquired about colleagues in the course of employment, unless disclosure serves professional purposes;
- Discuss professional matters concerning colleagues in a professional manner;

- Accept a position or responsibility only on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications;
- Adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment unless the contract has been altered without the consent of the affected parties, except as provided by law, legally terminated, or legally voided;
- Use sound professional judgment in delegating professional responsibilities to others;
- Not interfere with the free participation of colleagues in the affairs of their associations;
- Not use coercive or threatening means in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues;
- Not knowingly misrepresent their professional qualifications;
- Not knowingly distort evaluation of colleagues;
- Not criticize a colleague before students, except as unavoidably related to an administrative or judicial proceeding.

Source: 2 SDR 40, effective December 9, 1975; 11 SDR 96, 11 SDR 112, effective July 1, 1985; subdivisions (9) and (10) transferred from 24:08:03:04, 13 SDR 3, effective July 22, 1986; subdivisions (4) and (5) transferred from 24:08:03:04, 13 SDR 11, effective August 11, 1986.

General Authority: SDCL 13-43-25. Law Implemented: SDCL 13-43-25.